

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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USNMR SHAPE

S E C R E T USNATO 430

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MASS, MPOL, NATO, PO
SUBJECT: PORTUGUESE FORCE MODERNIZATION

REF: (A) STATE 012319 (DTG 190110Z JAN 77), (B) USNATO 0310
(DTG 200955Z JAN 77), (C) STATE 015874 (DTG 250007Z
JAN 77, NOTAL), (D) LISBON 0650 (DTG 241815Z JAN 77),
(E) BONN 01309 (DTG 211820Z JAN 77)

1. DEPDEFAD CALLED ON FRG DEFAD (BGEN SCHUENEMANN)
JANUARY 25 TO INFORM HIM, WITH APPROPRIATE CAVEATS, OF
US DECISIONS REGARDING PORTUGUESE FORCE MODERNIZATION
(REF A), TO DISCUSS US VIEWS ON SOLICITING ASSISTANCE OF
OTHER ALLIES FOR THE BRIGADE (REFS B AND C), AND TO URGE
FRG TO PAY COSTS OF UPGRADING M-48 A2 TANKS (REF D).

2. SCHUENEMANN SAID THAT, UNTIL THE FRG'S FEDERAL SECURITY
COUNCIL MEETS ON FEBRUARY 2, THE FRG WILL NOT BE ABLE TO
RELEASE DETAILS OF ITS PORTUGUESE ASSISTANCE PLANS TO
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ALLIES OTHER THAN THE US. HE AGREED WITH ALL ASPECTS OF
REF B SCENARIO AND NOTED THAT, IN HIS VIEW, IT WOULD BE
PREFERABLE TO DELAY A MEETING OF THE NATO AD HOC GROUP
INTO LATE FEBRUARY IF NECESSARY, IN ORDER TO MAKE BILATERAL
CONTACTS FIRST, RATHER THAN FOR THE US AND FRG TO BEGIN
SOLICITING ASSISTANCE FROM OTHER ALLIES IN THE FORUM OF
THE AD HOC GROUP ITSELF. DEPDEFAD SUGGESTED THAT IT MIGHT
BE USEFUL FOR CHAIRMAN AND US, FRG AND PORTUGUESE REPS ON
THE AD HOC GROUP TO MEET SOON, IN ORDER TO CONFIRM AGREEMENT
TO REF B SCENARIO, SO THAT BILATERAL CONTACTS COULD BEGIN

AS SOON AS THE GERMAN FEDERAL SECURITY COUNCIL HAS CONFIRMED FRG DECISIONS. SCHUENEMANN HAS ALREADY OBTAINED THE AGREEMENT OF HIS AUTHORITIES CONVOKING SUCH A MEETING.

3. REGARDING POSSIBLE FRG ASSUMPTION OF COSTS FOR TANK MODERNIZATION, SCHUENEMANN REPEATED, VIRTUALLY TO THE LETTER, WHAT MGEN BRANDT TOLD EMBASSY BONN JANUARY 21 (REF E). HE REITERATED GENERAL BRANDT'S REQUEST FOR ANSWERS TO HIS DETAILED QUESTIONS ON THIS SUBJECT (PARA 7, REF E). DEPDEFAD OBSERVED, AND SCHUENEMANN AGREED, THAT THERE IS A SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCE BETWEEN HAVING M-48 A2 TANKS WHICH ARE SCHEDULED TO BE REPLACED WHICH IS THE FRG SITUATION, AND RECEIVING SOMEWHAT OUTDATED TANKS WITH NO PROSPECT FOR REPLACEMENT IN THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE WHICH WOULD BE THE PORTUGUESE SITUATION.

4. COMMENT: WE WERE SOMEWHAT DISAPPOINTED THAT FRG CANNOT YET RELEASE DETAILS OF ITS ASSISTANCE PLANS BILATERALLY TO OTHER ALLIES. WE CONTINUE TO BELIEVE, HOWEVER, THAT SOME DELAY IN A FORMAL AD HOC GROUP MEETING WOULD BE PREFERABLE TO SUCH A MEETING CONDUCTED WITHOUT THE OBVIOUS ADVANTAGES OF ADVANCE BILATERAL US AND FRG COORDINATION WITH THE OTHER ALLIES. WE PLAN TO APPROACH OTHER PRINCIPALS JANUARY 26 TO CONFIRM OUR DESIRED SCENARIO WITH THEM. THIS SHOULD SPEED NECESSARY BILATERAL COORDINATION FOLLOWING RATIFICATION BY FEDERAL SECURITY COUNCIL OF FRG DECISIONS. BECAUSE OF THIS DELAY, HOWEVER, AND THE DEFENSE PLANNING SYMPOSIUM
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SCHEDULED IN OBERAMMERGAU FOR WEEK OF FEBRUARY 6, THE EARLIEST FEASIBLE TIME FOR AD HOC GROUP MEETING WOULD BE WEEK OF FEBRUARY 13. SINCE THIS CONVERSATION RESULTED IN THE SECOND CALL FOR A BREAKDOWN OF TANK UPGRADING COSTS, WE HOPE THAT WASHINGTON WILL BE ABLE TO PROVIDE A SPEEDY RESPONSE TO FRG QUESTIONS (PARA 7, REF E). END COMMENT.
STRAUSZ-HUPE

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